


TOWN COUNCIL WEEKLY STATUS REPORT

March 31, 2016

 Volume 24, No. 13

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Monday, April 4th, Town Council Committee of the Whole Special Meeting (Budget Review Session), 6:00 p.m., Town Hall Annex, CR1
- Tuesday, April 5th, the Town Council Personnel and Appointments Committee meeting has been cancelled.
- Tuesday, April 5th, Town Council Committee of the Whole Special Meeting (Budget Review Session), 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Annex, CR1
- Tuesday, April 5th, Town Council, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall Annex, CR1
- Wednesday, April 6th, Town and City Councils/RTM/Board of Education Liaison Committee, 5:30 p.m., Administration Office, Room 11
- Thursday, April 7th, Economic Development Commission, 4:45 p.m., Town Hall Annex, CR2
- Thursday, April 7th, Town Council Committee of the Whole Special Meeting (Budget Review Session), 6:00 p.m., Town Hall Annex, CR1
- Thursday, April 7th, Permanent School Building Committee, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall Annex, CR2
- Saturday, April 9th, Town Council Committee of the Whole Special Meeting (Budget Review Session), 9:00 a.m., Town Hall Annex, CR1

ONE BOOK, ONE REGION

Bryan Stevenson, the author of *Just Mercy*, Eastern Connecticut's 2015-2016 One Book, One Region choice, will appear for a talk and book signing on April 4th at 7:00 p.m. in the Palmer Auditorium at Connecticut College.

Just Mercy is the story of Stevenson's lifelong dedication to the pursuit of justice.

In his book, Stevenson weaves the story of his relentless effort for justice and the history of a flawed, justice system around the stories of his clients that were wrongly accused or inhumanely incarcerated. Following the presentation, Stevenson will be available to meet members of the audience and sign books.

Mr. Stevenson serves as the Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative, a nonprofit organization that provides legal representation to indigent defendants and prisoners who have been denied fair treatment in the legal system. His work fighting poverty and challenging racial discrimination in the criminal justice system has won him numerous awards including the MacArthur Foundation “Genius” Prize and the National Medal of Liberty from the American Civil Liberties Union.

This event will be the final program of the 2015-2016 One Book, One Region season.

OTHER ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 is a letter from Robert Palm resigning from the Noank School Public Gardens Task Force as of March 24th.
2. Attachment 2 is an invitation from Children First Groton for the Healthy Development: A Summit on Infant, Children, and Adolescent Mental Health to be held on April 7th from 4:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Fitch High School.
3. Attachment 3 is an invitation from the Eastern Connecticut Chamber of Commerce for the business breakfast “Annual Tourism Forecast” on April 8th at 7:45 a.m. at Latitude 41, 105 Greenmanville Avenue. The fee to attend is \$17.00 for members, \$25.00 for non-members and a \$5.00 walk-in fee if you do not register beforehand at <http://info.chamberect.com/events>.
4. Attachment 4 is an invitation from the Economic Development Commissions of the Town and City of Groton for “Get to Know Your Groton” on April 14th at 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Par 4, 93 Plant Street. This event is an opportunity to meet the Commission members and learn about the happenings within the community. This event is free and open to the public although registration is encouraged. Please contact the Mystic Chamber of Commerce at 860-572-9578 or visit their website at www.mysticchamber.org to register.

5. Attachment 5 is an invitation from the Connecticut Foundation for Open Government for the 2016 Freedom of Information Annual Conference on April 22nd from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at The Riverhouse at Goodspeed Station, 55 Bridge Road, Haddam. The featured topic will be “Hot Topics in FOI... Digging Deeper”. The registration fee is \$50.00 per person which includes a continental breakfast and lunch. The registration deadline is April 15th.
6. Attachment 6 is a notification from Fitch Ratings, Inc. of Groton’s General Obligation Bonds Rating Outlook.
7. Attachment 7 is an update from the Office of Planning and Development Services on building activity and the projects and initiatives of the Economic and Community Development and Planning divisions.

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORTS

1. Office of Planning and Development (February):

- Staff has started work on two planning studies in the Mystic area designed to provide baseline data from which new zoning regulations will be developed.
- Staff has held several pre-application meetings with developers including those purchasing William Seely School and the new owners of a Route 12 property where an application for a new apartment complex is expected.
- Seven Certificates of Occupancy were issued for Thames Edge at Fairview, Phase II.
- The Zoning Commission has started meeting twice a month to handle its applications and regulation amendments.
- The Economic Development Commission has been working with Economic Development staff to design an outreach brochure to distribute during business visitations.
- Economic Development staff has begun work on a document to describe and explain the various local and state incentives.
- There were 38 building permits, 26 electrical permits, 12 plumbing permits and 15 mechanical permits issued.
- There were 7 sign violations issued.

Attachments
MRO/lh

To: Nicki Bresnayan
From: Robert Palm
March 24, 2016

Dear Nicki,

This is to notify you that I am resigning my position on the Noank School Public Gardens, effective immediately, and to thank you for all the help and support you've given me, and to the Task Force, over the last couple of years.

I recently moved out of Groton, and understand that my not being a resident of the town precludes me from serving on a town body. More importantly, I believe that in keeping with our mission of creating a public outdoor space for all the citizens of the town of Groton, a resident should step in to take my place.

I'm very pleased that we've gotten this far, and with Spring planting around the corner, the Gardens will blossom anew.

Please convey my thanks to Mark and to the Town Council, especially those members who believed in this project from its conception.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Palm', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert Palm

MAR 24 2016

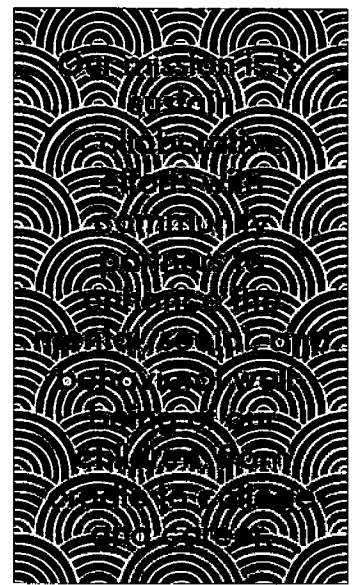


**Groton Public Schools,
Children First Groton, The
Town and City of Groton hosts**

**Healthy Development:
A Summit on Infant,
Children, Adolescent
Mental Health**

**Thursday, April 7th, 2015
4:00 PM – 7:30 PM**

**Register by March 21, 2015 at
www.grotonct.org**



**Fitch High
School**

101 Groton Long
Point Road
Groton, CT 06340

**Dinner &
Childcare
Provided**



Healthy Development: A Summit on Infant, Children and Adolescent Mental Health

April 7, 2016, from 4:00 – 7:00 PM

At Fitch High School

101 Groton Long Point Road, Groton CT

**Hosted by Groton Public Schools, Children First Groton and
The Town and City of Groton**

A COMMUNITY CALL TO ACTION

- ✦ Our mission is to sustain collaborative efforts with community partners to enhance the mental, social, and behavioral health and well-being of our school-aged youth.
- ✦ Our purpose is to bring a diverse group of stakeholders together with rich and extensive knowledge about child and adolescent mental health to review and prioritize available scientific information, raise awareness, improve public comprehension, and identify resources, services, and needs of the community in an effort to promote our students' mental health.
- ✦ The outcome will be to prioritize the needs of the community and establish working groups that will provide education and support to our children and families.

**Keynote speaker Dr. Jeffrey Vanderploeg, Vice President for Mental Health
Initiatives at Child Health Development Institute of Connecticut;
And Dr. Robert Franks, President/CEO of Judge Baker Children's Center
Acknowledgement of our community partners and distinguished guests**

Please RSVP by March 14 to Susan Austin, Assistant Superintendent, Groton Public Schools at saustin@groton.k12.ct.us or call 860-572-2125.



Groton Public Schools, Children First Groton and Groton Town and City hosts
Healthy Development: A Summit on Children and Adolescent Mental Health
Thursday, April 7th 2016 @ 4 PM – 7:00 PM
FHS Auditorium and Cafeteria

AGENDA

- 4:00 – 4:40 PM** **Welcome (FHS Auditorium):** Dr. Michael Graner, Superintendent, Susan Austin, Assistant Superintendent and Kim Watson, Board of Education Chair of Groton Public Schools
- Acknowledgements around the room
 - Mission, Purpose and Outcomes of the Summit
 - A Core Story – A Call to Action
Examples: **The Ana Grace Project**, “**Love Wins**” (Mrs. Nelba Márquez-Greene, mother of Ana Grace)
- 4:40 – 5:30 PM** **Keynote speaker:** Dr. Jeffrey Vanderploeg, Vice President for Mental Health Initiatives at Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut (CHDI) and Dr. Robert Franks, Formerly of CHDI, currently President and CEO of Judge Baker Children’s Center in Boston, MA
- State and national perspective on children’s healthy development
 - Focus areas that impact Groton and the region of southeastern Connecticut.
 - Questions and Answers
- 5:30 – 6:30 PM** **Light Dinner and Breakout groups (FHS Cafeteria)**
- Development of Cultural Competency Workgroups based on focus areas:
 - School based practices (awareness, prevention, intervention and PBIS/SRBI)
 - Health Curriculum revisions to include mental health and substance abuse prevention
 - Suicide prevention and high risk behaviors (subgroup on school/community violence prevention)
 - Access and delivery of services
 - Data to determine services provided, funding resources
 - Policy and advocacy
 - Family and community outreach (subgroup focus on Military Families)
 - Group discussion around essential questions; Scribe reflections
- 6:30 – 7:00 PM** **Wrap-up**
- Report out on group discussions
 - Next steps, action plans, community forum

Healthy Development: A Summit on Infant, Children, Adolescent Mental Health

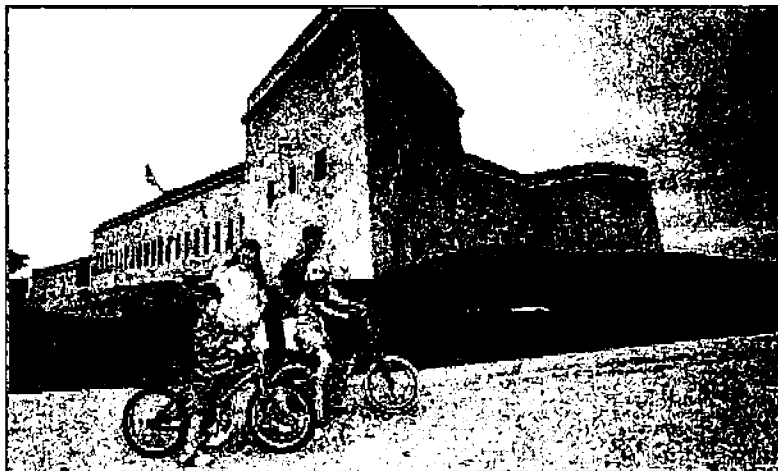
Breakout groups:

- 1.) **School Based Practices:** Awareness, prevention, intervention and Positive Behavior Support. Facilitators:
Questions: What are the current mental health/social emotional practices used in schools?
What is working well?
What are the challenges to providing mental health services in schools?
What role should the school play in providing mental health services?
- 2.) **Curriculum:** Mental and Physical health and wellness. Facilitators:
Questions: How is mental health, and substance abuse currently addressed in the curriculum?
How does the curriculum address healthy emotional development?
What needs to be done to create a more comprehensive curriculum PreK-12?
- 3.) **Trauma and Childhood:** Depression, suicide prevention, PTSD, RAD. Facilitators:
Questions: What are we doing currently to raise awareness about depression and suicide prevention?
What needs to be done to address the issues of suicide prevention?
How does the community handle responding to suicidal children?
How can we improve the response?
Do we have enough services in place to address this issue?
- 4.) **Services:** Access and delivery. Facilitators:
Questions: What services are available in the community?
What are the challenges to accessing services for children in the Groton area?
Are there particular populations that are underserved?
What can we do to improve access?
What role should interagency collaboration play? How can it be improved upon?
- 5.) **Grants and Funding:** Needs assessment based on data. Facilitators:
Questions: What data is currently available concern children's mental health?
Where are the gaps in data? Schools? Community agencies? Hospitals?
What data do we need to improve funding?
Should schools universally screen children for mental health related problems?
What needs to be done to improve funding in this part of the State?
- 6.) **Policy and Advocacy:** Facilitators:
Questions: Do our agencies and schools have adequate policies concerning the delivery of mental health services to children?
How do we engage State and local policy makers more comprehensively to improve our advocacy?
What are the central issues with policy and advocacy around children's mental health?
How can we work together to improve collaboration?
- 7.) **Cultural Awareness:** Family and Community Outreach.
Questions: How do schools and community partners provide information to the families regarding mental health and wellness of students?
How do we meet the needs of our diverse and transient population?
- 8.) **High Risk Behavior:** Substance abuse and violence.
Questions: What needs to be done to raise awareness about substance abuse and violence in our community?



CHAMBER of COMMERCE
EASTERN CONNECTICUT

Business Breakfast Annual Tourism Forecast



Business Breakfast:
Tourism Forecast **2016**
With CT DECD

Friday, April 8, 2016
at Latitude 41, Mystic

[Click for more](#)

Friday, April 8 | 7:45 to 9 AM | Latitude 41, Mystic

Tourism is one of eastern Connecticut's leading industries, and our region's tourism is a key economic driver for the whole state.

Join us for a presentation by **Tim Sullivan**, Deputy Commissioner of the Dept. of Economic and Community Development, on current trends in the industry, what we might expect this season, and more.

We'll also hear from **Randy Fiveash**, Director of the Office of Tourism, on the state's new tourism website. Both speakers will take guest questions at the end of the program.

Member: \$17 | Non-Member: \$25 | \$5 Walk-In Fee

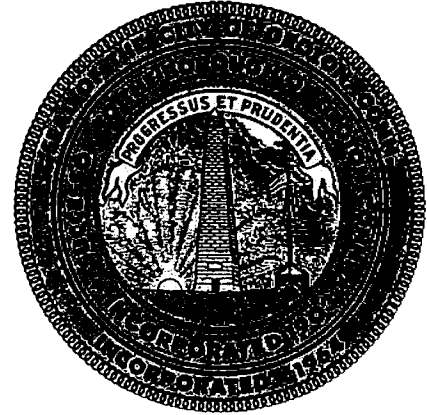
[Register Here](#)

Free Exposure!

Members, bring your company's materials or promotional products for our free Shared Member Display Table.

Sponsored by:





Get to Know Your Groton

**The EDC's (Economic Development Commission) of
both the Town and City of Groton**

**Invite you to an event to meet the many people who give their
time to make our community a wonderful place
to live and work!**

Hosted by Par 4, 93 Plant Street, Groton

April 14th 5:30-7:30

Appetizers and cash bar

**This is your opportunity to get to know your Groton and to
hear about the great things happening in our community!**

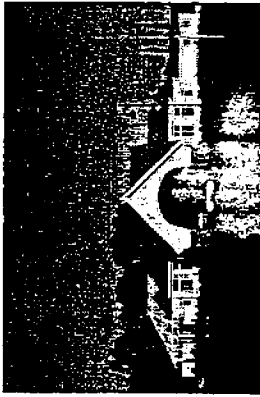
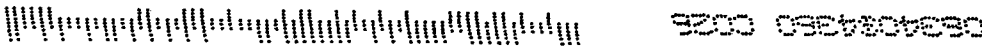
This event is free and open to the public.

RSVP: Mysticchamber.org/XXXX

860-572-9578

Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission
c/o Freedom of Information Commission
18-20 Trinity Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Town Manager
Town Hall, 45 Fort Hill Rd.
Groton, CT 06340



The Riverhouse
at
Goodspeed Station
55 Bridge Road
Haddam, CT 06438
Phone: 860.345.4100



2016
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
COMMISSION
ANNUAL CONFERENCE

FEATURED TOPIC:

Hot Topics in FOI...Digging Deeper

Directions:
From Hartford area: South on I-91 to Exit 22S (left-hand exit). South on Route 9 to Exit 7. Then follow directions in bold below.
From New Haven area: North on I-95 to Exit 69. North on Route 9 to Exit 7. Then follow directions in bold below.
From New London area: South on I-95 to Exit 69. North on Route 9 to Exit 7. Then follow directions in bold below.
Turn left at the end of the ramp (ramp is three miles long), following Route 82. At first stoplight, turn right onto Bridge Rd. The Riverhouse will be approximately 1/2 mile down on the right.

Friday, April 22, 2016
8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

The Riverhouse at Goodspeed Station
Haddam, Connecticut

Sponsored by
Connecticut Freedom of Information Commission
Connecticut Foundation for Open Government
Connecticut Council on Freedom of Information
Connecticut Society of Professional Journalists

2016
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMMISSION
CONFERENCE PROGRAM

8:00 A.M. - 8:30 A.M.

Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:30 A.M. - 8:40 A.M.

Welcome and Introduction

Colleen M. Murphy
Executive Director and General Counsel
Freedom of Information Commission

8:40 A.M. - 8:45 A.M.

Break

8:45 A.M. - 10:30 A.M.

Break Out Sessions

Nuts and Bolts:

Answers to Cutting Edge FOIA Questions
FOIC Staff

OR

FOI 101: A Crash Course in the FOIA Act

Tracie C. Brown
Commission Counsel
Freedom of Information Commission

10:30 A.M. - 10:40 A.M.

Break

10:40 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.

Panel Discussion

Complying with the FOIA: Some Helpful Hints

Co-Moderators and Panel Members:

Thomas B. Mooney
Attorney and Partner, Shipman and Goodwin, LLP

Henry J. Zaccardi
Attorney, Shipman and Goodwin, LLP

11:30 A.M. - 11:40 A.M.

Break

11:40 A.M. - 12:50 P.M.

Panel Discussion

Hot Topics in FOI...Digging Deeper

Moderator:

Aaron Bayer, Partner
Wiggin and Dana, LLP

Panel Members:

Matt Kauffman, Reporter
Hartford Courant
Brian Foley, Deputy Chief
Hartford Police Department
Mark Sommaruga, Partner
Pullman and Conley LLC
Patricia Strauss, President
Connecticut Town Clerks Association
and Westport Town Clerk

12:50 P.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Break

1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.

Luncheon

and

Keynote Speaker

Kevin Lembo
Comptroller
State of Connecticut

REGISTRATION FORM

\$50.00 Registration fee covers all or part of the program, including continental breakfast and lunch.

Registration for conference and luncheon on a space available basis.

Registration must be received by April 15, 2016 and will only be accepted with full payment, payable to:

CONNECTICUT FOUNDATION FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT

C/O FOI COMMISSION, 18-20 TRINITY STREET, 1ST FLOOR, HARTFORD, CT 06106

NAME: _____

Please check if you plan to attend Breakout Session FOI 101 _____

TELEPHONE OR EMAIL: _____

AFFILIATION: _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

Lunch includes: Soup - Vegetarian minestrone; Baby Greens with Mandarin Orange Segments, Feta Citrus Vinaigrette (toasted almonds on the side); Chicken Napoleon; Pan Seared Salmon with Mango, Cucumber and Cilantro Lime Salsa; Penna ala Vodka; Seasonal Grilled Vegetables; Garlic Mashed Potatoes; Rolls and Butter; Chocolate Mousse and Coffee and Teas with Assorted Soft Drinks

Once again, we need your help to make our "Nuts and Bolts" presentation effective. Our "Nuts and Bolts" session in 2016, which will focus on the records provisions of the FOI Act, will include only a brief presentation by the FOI staff. The remainder of the 90 minutes reserved for "Nuts and Bolts" will consist of staff members answering your questions about pressing Freedom of Information issues. As you might recall, we have utilized this format in the past and have had overwhelmingly positive response from attendees. To make this work, we are asking you to send us questions about FOI and its applications in Connecticut. We will need active participation. So, even if you are unable to attend the conference, send us questions by April 15, 2016. We will spend the time before the conference reviewing the questions and researching answers. You can include your name if you desire, but it is not required. Also, you can e-mail the questions to our office to the attention of Tom Hennick at Thomas.Hennick@ct.gov or Tracie.Brown@ct.gov. You also can send them under separate cover using the form below to Nuts and Bolts Questions, Freedom of Information Commission, Attn. Tom Hennick, 18-20 Trinity Street, Hartford, CT 06106. We look forward to hearing from you.

FOI Question(s)

Name: _____

Agency/Town; _____

Question:

Once again this year, as part of our annual Freedom of Information Conference, FOI staff is going to offer a special session for attendees who have had limited interaction with the Freedom of Information Act. As part of our Nuts and Bolts package, during the first 90 minutes of the conference, we are offering a breakout session for those who want to learn some of the bare essentials of FOI. A staff member will break away to a separate room with those attendees who would like to hear a version of "FOI 101." If you are interested in this session, please mark your preference on your reservation form. One note: If we do not get at least 10 attendees interested in this break out session, it will not be offered.

Thanks,
Tom Hennick

MAR 28 2013

FITCH AFFIRMS GROTON, CT'S GO BONDS AT 'AA'; OUTLOOK STABLE

Weekly Status Report
March 31, 2016
ATTACHMENT 6

Fitch Ratings-New York-22 March 2016: Fitch Ratings has affirmed at 'AA' the following Town of Groton, Connecticut's (the town) general obligation (GO) bonds:

--\$8,315,000 GO bonds, issue of 2014, lot A;

--\$300,000 GO bonds, issue of 2014, lot B (Taxable).

The Rating Outlook is Stable.

SECURITY

The bonds are backed by the town's full faith and credit and unlimited taxing authority.

KEY RATING DRIVERS

STRONG FINANCIAL PRACTICES: The town's long standing strong financial management practices is a key credit strength and a mitigant to its concentrated economy. The town consistently reports a satisfactory financial cushion supported by independent revenue raising flexibility, conservative budgeting and a demonstrated ability to adjust spending in response to revenue declines.

LOW DEBT; MANAGEABLE RETIREMENT COSTS: Fitch expects Groton's debt ratios to remain low as future debt plans are moderate. The town's contribution consistently matches the actuarial requirements for its pension and other post-employment benefits (OPEB) plans. Overall carrying costs for long-term liabilities are low despite rapid amortization of debt and full funding of the OPEB annual required contribution (ARC).

IMPROVED EMPLOYMENT PICTURE; HIGH CONCENTRATION: After a prolonged period of decline, employment grew modestly in 2014 and 2015. The town's employment base, driven by the presence of the U.S. Navy, Electric Boat, and Pfizer, is highly concentrated from both an employment and tax base standpoint.

RATING SENSITIVITIES

CONCENTRATED TAX BASE

The town's ability to manage its finances and maintain adequate reserves at or close to current levels is a key rating factor because of the highly concentrated tax base. The Stable Outlook reflects Fitch's expectation for continued prudent budgetary management supported by the town's satisfactory reserve levels and ability to raise revenues.

CREDIT PROFILE

The Town of Groton is located in southeastern Connecticut with the 2014 population of 40,167 remaining relatively flat since the 2000 census. The town's location on local waterways serves as an important driver of economic activity. The town is adjacent to the Thames River on the west, the Mystic River on the east, and the Long Island Sound is located directly to the south.

The town's economy is heavily influenced by the sizable presence of the Naval Submarine Base New London (the base), General Dynamics' Electric Boat Corporation, and Pfizer. Collectively these firms employ 21,522 in the town (as of June 30, 2015). Pfizer and Electric Boat account for a high 13% and 6.6% of the town's \$5.4 billion tax base, respectively.

Each of these entities has a long-standing presence in the town. Electric Boat has plans to construct nine Virginia-Class submarines from 2019 to 2023. Additionally, under a five-year \$1.85 billion Ohio Replacement Contract, Electric Boat will perform research and development for a new class of ballistic-missile submarines to replace the Navy's current force of 14 Ohio-class submarines. Electric Boat projects an additional 1,800 employees in 2016 and up to 4,000 more by 2030. Pfizer's Groton campus remains the firm's largest research and development center despite demolishing a large building in 2013.

The employment picture for the town has improved somewhat, with modest 0.4% and 0.8% employment growth in 2015 and 2014, respectively, reversing a prolonged period of decline. The town's December 2015 unemployment rate of 4.7% was below that of the state's 4.9% and nation's 5%. Median household and per capita income levels as of 2014 were 113% and 120% of national levels and 86% and 89% of state levels, respectively.

PRUDENT MANAGEMENT; SATISFACTORY FINANCIAL CUSHION

The town's history of generally sound financial performance and revenue raising flexibility softens the overall credit risk associated with its concentrated economic base. General fund operating results consistently produce an adequate cushion with unreserved or unrestricted fund balance maintained between 8% and 14% of spending in each of the last five years.

After two years of surplus financial operations, the town ended fiscal 2015 with an operating deficit (after transfers) of \$1.7 million (or 1.3% of spending), dropping unrestricted reserves to \$16.8 million or 13% of spending. The deficit was primarily because of a reduction in the millage rate, which resulted in lower tax revenue (\$3.3 million or 4% less than the prior year), and a \$2.8 million (6%) decrease in intergovernmental revenue. Property taxes are the largest revenue source at 63% of general fund revenues.

The fiscal 2016 budget was balanced with an appropriation of \$5 million of fund balance for tax relief purposes. A major factor impacting fiscal 2016 was the loss of Pfizer building 118, resulting in a 2% decline in the Oct. 1, 2014 Grand List, and a \$1.8 million decrease in property tax revenue in fiscal 2016. Based on current estimates, the amount of fund balance appropriated will increase to \$5.4 million (4.3% of budgeted spending) due to revenue budget shortfalls, including declines in tax revenue (\$382,000) as well as state and federal aid (\$940,000). Management estimates the ending unrestricted fund balance will be \$11.3 million, or a satisfactory 9% of spending, and remains compliant with its 7.75% unassigned fund balance policy.

The proposed fiscal 2017 budget is a 0.1% decrease from the prior year, and includes a proposed 8.3% increase in the millage rate to 22.68 from 20.95. It is balanced with the use of \$247,434 of fund balance (less than 1% of spending). As expected by management, the Oct. 1, 2015 Grand List decreased by \$18.3 million (0.5%) which captured the remaining effects of the Pfizer building demolition. The Pfizer building has now been completely removed from the town's Grand List.

The town maintains additional flexibility via its policy of annually funding a capital reserve; the town's fiscal 2017 proposed budget includes a \$2.9 million contribution to this fund. In the event of fiscal pressure, the level of annual funding could be adjusted as necessary to alleviate

Fitch believes the town also maintains a good deal of revenue raising flexibility that positions it to offset tax base declines or other unforeseen operating challenges. The town's tax rate is regionally competitive and there are no legal limitations on tax increases.

LOW LONG-TERM LIABILITY BURDEN

The town's overall debt burden is low at \$1,530 per capita and 1.1% of market value. The 2017 - 2022 capital improvement program totals \$117 million and calls for an additional \$37 million in debt financing (yet to be approved by voters). Other funding sources for the plan include the capital reserve fund, grants, and reimbursement from the state. This additional debt should not have a material effect on the town's modest debt profile. Not included in the CIP is the potential for an additional \$55 million of debt for the town's portion of the Board of Education re-districting/re-alignment program, yet to be approved by town council. The proposal is also contingent on voter approval, with a possible referendum in November 2016, and includes the construction of one new middle school and the conversion of two middle schools into elementary schools. The proposed new debt is not expected to increase the town's overall debt burden above the moderate range.

All town employees, excluding teachers, participate in the town's agent multiple-employer defined benefit plan, the Town of Groton Retirement System (TGRS). The town is one of three employers participating in TGRS. The town's contribution to TGRS consistently matches the actuarial requirement. Using GASB 68 reporting, the ratio of assets-to-liabilities at June 30, 2015 improved to 88.7% from 79.6% the prior year, or a Fitch-estimated 82% from 71.7% using a 7% discount rate assumption. Fitch expects the town to continue to make full actuarial contributions given past practices. Board of Education teachers participate in the State Teachers' Retirement System, a cost-sharing pension plan, for which the state is solely responsible for all contributions.

OPEB liabilities are manageable with the total unfunded liability of \$34.7 million less than 1% of market value. In fiscal 2008 the town established an OPEB trust fund to prefund the liability; since fiscal 2012, the town's annual contribution met or exceeded the OPEB ARC. As of June 30, 2015, the town's OPEB trust had \$13.4 million in assets. The annual overfunding of OPEB obligations provides some additional budgetary flexibility for the town.

Carrying costs for debt service, pension, and OPEB ARC totaled a low 9.2% of total governmental fund spending in 2015 despite rapid principal amortization of 77% within 10 years.

Contact:

Primary Analyst
Nicole Wood
Director
+1-212-908-0735
Fitch Ratings, Inc.
33 Whitehall Street
New York, NY 10004

Secondary Analyst
Parker Montgomery
Analyst
+1-212-908-0356

Committee Chairperson

Media Relations: Elizabeth Fogerty, New York, Tel: +1 (212) 908 0526, Email: elizabeth.fogerty@fitchratings.com.

Additional information is available at 'www.fitchratings.com'.

Fitch recently published exposure drafts of state and local government tax-supported criteria (Exposure Draft: U.S. Tax-Supported Rating Criteria, dated Sept. 10, 2015 and Exposure Draft: Incorporating Enhanced Recovery Prospects into U.S. Local Tax-Supported Ratings, dated Feb. 2, 2016). The drafts include a number of proposed revisions to existing criteria. If applied in the proposed form, Fitch estimates the revised criteria would result in changes to less than 10% of existing tax-supported ratings. Fitch expects that final criteria will be approved and published at the beginning of the second quarter of 2016. Once approved, the criteria will be applied immediately to any new issue and surveillance rating review. Fitch anticipates the criteria to be applied to all ratings that fall under the criteria within a 12-month period from the final approval date.

In addition to the sources of information identified in the applicable criteria specified below, this action was informed by information from CreditScope, Lumesis, and IHS.

Applicable Criteria

Exposure Draft: Incorporating Enhanced Recovery Prospects into US Local Tax-Supported Ratings (pub. 02 Feb 2016)

https://www.fitchratings.com/creditdesk/reports/report_frame.cfm?rpt_id=875108

Exposure Draft: U.S. Tax-Supported Rating Criteria (pub. 10 Sep 2015)

https://www.fitchratings.com/creditdesk/reports/report_frame.cfm?rpt_id=869942

Tax-Supported Rating Criteria (pub. 14 Aug 2012)

https://www.fitchratings.com/creditdesk/reports/report_frame.cfm?rpt_id=686015

U.S. Local Government Tax-Supported Rating Criteria (pub. 14 Aug 2012)

https://www.fitchratings.com/creditdesk/reports/report_frame.cfm?rpt_id=685314

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Hylton, Lisa

Subject: FW: Fitch Ratings Update: Town of Groton, CT - OPDS update email 2 of 2
Attachments: Building Activity update March 2016.docx; Town Council update on projects memo 3 8 2016.docx; ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION 030816.docx; BUILDING ACTIVITY DATA_FYE 2016 YTD updated 3 8 2016.XLS; PLANNING DEVELOPMENT DIVISION 3 8 2016.docx

Attached is a brief memo and the Office of Planning and Development Services division updates explaining our recent short and long range planning projects, key activities in our inspections and building division, and economic development projects that are proposed, underway or recently completed.

The Office of Planning and Development Services monthly reports are located on the town webpage at: <http://www.groton-ct.gov/depts/plandev/opdsMonthlyReports.asp>

Listed below is the webpage link for the PowerPoint presentation from the Town Council meeting on February 23, 2016 in which the final results of the regulatory analysis and market analysis update were presented. Due to the large size of the presentation, I did want to include the webpage link in this email instead of emailing it as an attachment. The presentation, as well as the drafts of the market analysis and the regulatory audit are available on the town webpage at: <http://www.groton-ct.gov/depts/plandev/MarketAnalysis.asp>

I would encourage you to share this information with the Town Council and the RTM. Please let me know if you need any additional information.

Jon

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TOWN OF GROTON

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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TO: Mark Oefinger, Town Manager

FROM: Jonathan J. Reiner, Director of Planning and Development

DATE: March 8, 2016

SUBJECT: Office of Planning and Development Services Initiatives and Projects

The Office of Planning and Development Services (OPDS) serves as the Town's short and long range planning department for all development and conservation activity, with additional focus on attracting and retaining business in Groton, as well as fostering a great community and small business environment. We also support building and inspections as well as zoning and code enforcement for the Town. The department consists of three divisions: Planning, Inspection Services, and Economic and Community Development.

Enclosed are reports of current projects and recent activity from the Planning, Inspection Services, and Economic and Community Development Divisions of the Office of Planning and Development Services. The major initiatives of the divisions over the past year, and more specifically over the past quarter have been completing the town wide market analysis and regulatory audit; finalizing the town's Plan of Conservation and Development which serves as our long range planning document; overseeing the final construction projects associated with and the closing out of our previous Community Developments Block Grants; permitting and inspecting numerous large scale development and redevelopment projects in the Town; and continued improvements on streamlining our regulatory process.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions on any of this information, please feel free to contact me at (860) 446-5980 or at jreiner@groton-ct.gov.

Update on Building Activity 2016

Odd Fellows, Lestertown Road, Phase 2, 17 units nearing completion.

Mystic River Residential Care, Godfrey Street, addition and renovations 12,000 sq. ft. under construction.

Mystic Indoor Sports, Welles Road, addition 28,000 sq. ft. nearing completion.

Electric Boat, Kings Highway, renovations 83,000 sq. ft. 1st phase completed.

Doncasters, Poquonnock Road, additions and renovations 18,000 sq. ft. under construction.

Mystic Business Park, Flanders Road, 6 buildings totaling 88,000 sq. ft. under construction.

Cooks Equipment, Airport Industrial Park, new building 12,000 sq. ft. under construction.

Kentucky Fried Chicken, Route 12, addition and renovations plans and permit submitted.

LBI, North Road, new building 24,000 sq. ft. plans and permit submitted.

Groton Utilities, Poquonnock Road, 4052.32KW solar photovoltaic field consisting of 13,072 panels, plans and permit submitted waiting on Siting Council approval.

Gabriele's Karate, Poquonnock Road, 2nd floor 11 one bedroom apartments under construction.

Aldi Grocery Store, 688 Long Hill Road, 18,925 sq. ft. new construction, plans and permit submitted.

High Rock Hotel, 40 High Rock Road, renovation of 32,500 sq. ft. for hotel, plans and permit submitted.

Central Hall Building, 8-22 West Main Street, 4 floors 33,690 sq. ft. mixed residential/commercial, foundation plans and permit submitted.

Spicer Mansion, Library Street, 8 suite bed and breakfast under construction

Sift Bakery, 5 Water Street, interior renovations under construction.

Oyster Club Restaurant, 13 Water Street, addition under construction.

Taqueria Cinco Mexican Restaurant, 441 Long Hill Road, interior renovations under construction.

New package store, 441 Long Hill Road, interior renovations under construction.

Walmart addition, building permit submitted

Groton Utilities Water Treatment Plant expansion, plans approved

The Sandbox, Route 184, 15,000 sq. ft. indoor volleyball facility, plans approved

Projects in the application process

Long Meadow Landings, South Road, 10,600 sq. ft. 22 unit apartment building.

Mystic River Ambulance, addition, 756 sq. ft.

Groton Townhouse Apartments, Fort Hill Road, 19 units

U-Haul self-storage, retail and equipment rental, Gold Star Highway

Four lot subdivision, Grove Avenue

Fieldcrest Water Storage Tank replacement, 115 Oslo Street

Applications Expected/Preliminary Discussions

Apartments, Route 12/Pleasant Valley Road North, 150 units

Nano Brewery, Water Street Mystic

Medical offices, mixed use, Poquonnock Bridge Volunteer Fire Station, Fort Hill Road

Mystic Shipyard, 35,000 SF storage and repair building

New Bank, 996 Poquonnock Road

Redevelopment of Seely School

Buildout of Odd Fellows/Fairview property, Military Highway

TOTAL BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED BY USE TYPE

FYE 2012 HIGHLIGHTS

FYE 2013 HIGHLIGHTS

EYE 2014 HIGHLIGHTS

Page 1 of 2

FYE 2015 HIGHLIGHTS

973 North Rd #4 /LBI - new metal building	\$465,000.00
52 Hazelnut Hill Rd - Pequot Health Center MRI upgrade	\$87,900.00
557 Long Hill Rd - Burger King Remodel	\$75,000.00
220 Route 12 - Pet Val U tenant fit-out	\$93,780.00
135 Pearl St, Noank - Maxwell Boat Yard - New boat house	\$135,000.00
82-84 Plaza Court - retail fit-out for doctor's office	\$60,000.00
11 Village La - Poquonnock Village renovate & rehab	\$665,520.00
780 Long Hill Rd - retail fit-out for a nail salon	\$8,000.00

FYE 2016 YTD HIGHLIGHTS

835 Poquonnock Rd - Doncasters Addition & Expansion	\$3,578,600.00
90 Welles Rd - Mystic Indoor Sports Facility Expansion & Renovations	\$649,000.00
9 Kings Hwy - Interior Renovation of former Pfizer facility by EB	\$5,364,000.00
230 Route 12 - Selective Demo and Reconstruction of KFC	\$540,000.00
973 North Rd #3/LBI - excavation & foundation for new metal building	\$65,000.00
117 Long Hill Rd - 99 Restaurant Interior Remodel	\$56,036.00
1240 Poquonnock Rd/GU - 4052.32KW solar photovoltaic field	\$5,268,016.00
516 Gold Star Hwy - Toll Gate Plaza renovations	\$116,000.00
441 Long Hill Rd - Lighthouse Square - tenant fit-out for Anytime Fitness	\$100,000.00
27 Kings Hwy - Bowling Alley roof replacement	\$158,000.00
150 Gold Star Hwy - Wal-Mart Expansion	\$5,209,714.00
40 High Rock Road - Renovate interior space; add bathrooms	\$1,083,060.00
688 Long Hill Road - Aldi Super Market	\$935,000.00
13 Water St. - Oyster Club build-out	\$61,000.00
839 Poquonnock Rd - PCC Structural Chimney	\$27,000.00
1425 Gold Star Hwy - Granite Group Interior Renovations	\$14,500.00
1028 Poquonnock Rd - Gabriele's residential apartment units	\$125,000.00
441 Long Hill Rd - Lighthouse Square - tenant fit-out for Restaurant	\$10,000.00
5 Water St - Sift Bake Shop	

FYE 2012 - 2016 YTD HIGHLIGHTS

Signage Upgrades - Townwide locations	\$280,900.00
Cell Towers -Antenna & equipment ugrades	\$581,000.00
Solar PV Panels - Townwide locations	

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION - PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

The following highlights key project and initiatives from December 2015 – February 2016.

- **“Business in Focus”:** Staff assisted in completing a promotional article that was released in December. The article was distributed to over 350,000 hard copy subscribers in the U.S. and Canada and to even more digital recipients. This article primarily benefits Groton’s exposure outside of the Connecticut market. The article can be found on page 30 at the following link: http://www.businessinfocusmagazine.com/e_mag/BIFNADec2015/#?page=0
- **Airport Development Zone (ADZ)** – Staff has partnered with CERC to complete this application for submittal to the state. CT enables certain communities with major airport assets to apply for ADZ designation. Such designation allows for the community to attract more business investment activity within a 2-mile radius from the airport through a tax incentive program. Tax exemptions granted only pertain to the increased value of the improvement up to 80% of that improved value for 5 years. The Department of Economic and Community Development positively anticipates Groton’s submittal.
- **Market Analysis** - Staff continued working with the Focus Group, EDC, and the consultants on the process and product. There were several meetings and presentations including one to the Committee of the Whole detailing the “Action Steps.” This product will provide data, guidance, and recommendations to help Groton strategically maximize investments towards reaching economic development objectives. Key general findings included the following:
 - Establish digital marketing and communication channels;
 - Increase collaboration, connectivity, and networking with a focus on high-quality development and business retention and expansion;
 - Reinvigorate the built environment with a focus on quality; and
 - Change perceptions - Re-define what it means to do business in Groton.
- **Mystic Education Center:** Staff met with DECD in December to discuss having Groton lead the marketing for the property and focus on local coordination. This follows a development of a feasibility study completed by VHB and Camoin including consideration of multiple redevelopment scenarios. DECD is interested in providing a substantial grant to Groton to complete this task since we can locally assist with the overall development process. Staff has begun showing the property to a few interested development groups.
- **Marketing and Promotions:** Staff assisted the EDC with the development of a brochure to be used in contacting local businesses seeking their comment. Through the work with Camoin, staff identified and has requested FY 2017 funding for a new dedicated Groton Economic

Development website. The website was a leading recommendation in the Market Analysis under the “Digital marketing” findings. Other initiatives being planned include email marketing, social media, and hard copy materials.

- Business Assistance and Attraction: Staff reacts to communications from businesses interested in relocating to Groton or expanding within Groton. These average over 30 per month. Such requests are documented for tracking and follow up assistance. Real estate locations for new businesses are investigated and options provided. Staff serves as a primary “Point of Contact” for new business inquiries to assist with implementation. Staff has also reached out to select businesses to attract them to Groton.
- 2016 Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (Competitive) – The Town is developing and submitting an application in April in collaboration with the Groton Housing Authority and ECHO. This is an \$800,000 grant proposal for rehabilitation of existing housing units. The Housing Authority is providing matching funds of \$80,000. The rehabilitation of units will include kitchen and bathroom updates, security features, and building code updates.
- Electric Vehicle Grant Program – Staff received notice in December that we were successful in gaining state funding for the project. As a result, Groton will receive funding to install a dual-head charging station at the Town Hall Annex, a dual-head station at the Groton Library, and one plug-in electric vehicle (partial funding). A second funding proposal was recently submitted for another charging station to be located at Town Hall.
- Property Listings on Town Website: Staff has updated the Town of Groton Economic Development webpage specific to “Featured Properties.” This will be updated on a regular ongoing basis in the future. The listings are found at this following link. <http://www.groton-ct.gov/depts/plandev/properties.asp>
- Northeast Rail Corridor (NRC): Staff participated in the NRC planning effort. Staff attended a public meeting in New Haven on December offering verbal comments favoring Option #1. This was followed up with written comments in support of that option since it best invests limited funding in existing rail line locations benefitting Groton. That option also includes a potential new stop in a location somewhere between New London and Mystic.
- Bus Shelter Project – Staff has mapped and photographed the bus shelters within the Town and City of Groton and has noted the very poor condition of all but one of these facilities. Staff is working within the Town and also with SEAT to put together a replacement program for these important and well used facilities benefitting all of the transit users in our area.
- Mystic Information Kiosk – Staff continues to pursue the creation of a Mystic Information Kiosk, but have shifted focus into its placement within an existing vacant storefront. This location

could be complimented with a “pop-up” shop of a new local startup business. Staff is working with the Downtown Mystic Merchants Association and the Chamber of Commerce.

- Thames River Heritage Park: Staff has participated with the “TRHP Transition Team” with overall program planning. Also, staff assisted with an RFP for Water Taxi service in 2016 and review of received proposals.

PLANNING DIVISION - PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

The following highlights key project and initiatives.

- Update to the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD): Completion of this document is expected by July of 2016. Staff has been working with the Planning Commission and a steering committee on this project for over 2 years. The POCD is a state required document that sets the Town's long term (ten year) planning priorities for development and conservation of the town. Public hearings and the adoption of this plan will occur in 2016.
- Regulatory Audit and Market Analysis: Staff has been working with VHB and Camoin and Associates to finalize the regulatory audit and market analysis process and product. The product will provide a roadmap for the regulatory changes needed to the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations. A final presentation on this product was made to the Town Council in February 2016. Changes to the regulations will be a separate initiative, some to be completed with existing in house staff, but with the majority of the work to be completed by outside experts in zoning and subdivision best and current practices. Planning staff has been focused on the regulatory audit, and has been working with the economic and community development staff on the connections between regulations and the market analysis. This project was a Town Council initiative with the goal of growing the grand list and increasing revenue.
- LOTICIP Grant: Planning staff has submitted and received a Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program (LOTICIP) grant for the Kings Highway/Bridge Street Intersection. The town's Economic Development Strategy identified this area as needing roadway improvements to help establish a gateway to Groton and to spur business development with better traffic patterns. Electric Boat has recently purchased the old Caldor plaza, and has moved over 700 employees to that recently renovated building. This grant was awarded by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) through the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (COG). The grant requires that the municipality pay for the design and permitting of the project, and the DOT will provide the municipality funding for the construction of the project.
- Water Resources Protection District (WRPD) Zoning Regulation revisions and other regulatory changes - Staff has been working with Groton Utilities and our experts from the Horsley Witten Group to assist the Zoning Commission in revising the 20 year old WRPD regulations. The purpose of these regulations is to protect the public drinking water reservoir. This section of the regulations was identified by both the Zoning Audit, and the Zoning Commission as a high priority for revision in order incorporate innovative technologies to protect the reservoir. A draft of the revised regulations has been presented to the Zoning Commission and we expect this regulation to be adopted in the next 2 months.

- Thomas Road multi-use path: This project has been in the planning and permitting process for a number of years. There have been delays in permitting and in acquiring the rights of way for the multi-use path. Planning staff is working with the Department of Public Works and the Town Attorney's office on finalizing the rights of way for the project.
- Development Process Guide: Planning staff has been working on a development process guide that is geared to all users from homeowners to large businesses. Staff expects a draft of this document to be completed in the next several months.
- Conservation Plan Update: The Conservation Plan, as prepared by the Conservation Commission, was last updated in 1990. This document inventories natural and cultural resources and identifies those that are worthy of protection. It is more detailed than the Conservation Theme of the Plan of Conservation and Development.
- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for FY 17: Every year the Office of Planning and Development Services completes the Town's CIP for the long term planning of large infrastructure and other municipal projects in town. This document takes a substantial amount of staff time, and is reviewed by the Planning Commission for consistency with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development. This document will be presented to the Town Council with the FYE 2017 budget for their review and approval.
- Staffing Boards and Commissions: A substantial amount of planning staff time is spent supporting land use commissions including Conservation, Wetlands, Planning, Zoning, Zoning Board of Appeals and Committee of Chairpersons. There are staff reports, agendas, meeting notices and legal procedures and requirements that must be followed for many different application types. In addition, for every application there is a large amount of time spent on plan review, inspections and paperwork that must be completed to bring each development project to a successful conclusion.

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

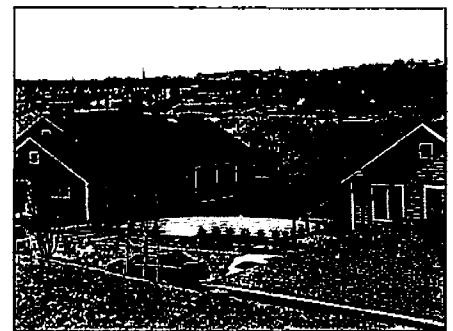
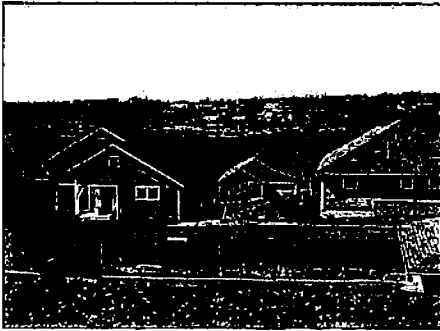
February 2016

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Planning staff has started work on two planning studies in the Mystic area designed to provide baseline data from which new zoning regulations will be developed. The planners are inventorying and categorizing public and quasi-public parking spaces on both sides of the Mystic River. They are also inventorying the uses, setbacks, form, and height of existing buildings on the Groton side of the river. This process will be used as a template to inventory and create regulations for other neighborhoods such as Poquonnock Bridge and Old Mystic.

Planning staff has held several pre-application meetings with developers including those purchasing the Seely School and the new owners of a Route 12 property where an application for a new apartment complex is expected.

Thames Edge at Fairview, Phase II



Seven Certificates of Occupancy were issued for Thames Edge at Fairview, Phase II. This phase is quickly nearing completion and the owners of Fairview are starting to think about phase III and the ultimate build-out of the property. They have met with Planning staff to discuss a wide range of ideas and expect to refine their development plans in the next year.

COMMISSION HIGHLIGHTS

Zoning Commission

The Zoning Commission has started meeting twice a month in order to handle its applications and regulation amendments. The regulation amendments are proceeding on two separate tracks. Planning Department staff has developed amendments designed to address recent court decisions that limit the Planning Commission's discretion in approving site plan waivers. These amendments go to public hearing in April. The Horsley Whitten Group is working on amendments that address a number of Regulatory Audit recommendations, including the WRPD, zoning uses, definitions and other sections.

Economic Development Commission

The Economic Development Commission has been working with Economic Development staff to design an outreach brochure to distribute during business visitations. The goal is to best understand local company needs, issues and opportunities. The EDC continues to welcome public and business input at all of their meetings. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 4:45 p.m. in the Town Hall Annex.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

First and second round interviews were conducted for the Economic Development Special position. The department hopes to have someone on board in April.

Economic Development staff has begun work on a document to describe and explain the various local and state incentive programs. Three local businesses are working with staff to take advantage of these incentives. As part of this effort, staff has been exploring the use of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to finance redevelopment, infrastructure, and other community-improvement projects in the Downtown Groton district. Business outreach increased recently with monthly totals averaging about 40 communications with existing and potential businesses. Community development staff will submit an \$800,000 CDBG grant application for the next round of upgrades to Groton Housing Authority property.

INSPECTION SERVICES DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

- ◇ Total building fees collected for FYE 2016 less reimbursements: \$234,618
- ◇ The Oyster Club at 13 Water Street is beginning a build out over the existing patio area to provide more indoor restaurant seating. A new Mexican restaurant is also being prepared for opening at 441 Long Hill Road.
- ◇ Elsewhere, the Industrial Supplies Company will soon begin roof, fascia and entry renovations to its building at 252 Thomas Road, also underway at Wyman-Gordon located at 839 Poquonnock Road is the addition of a structural steel tower, and The Granite Group is upgrading the interior office and lunchroom area at 1425 Gold Star Highway.
- ◇ Gabrielle's Karate is moving forward with long range plans for a mixed-use building at 1028 Poquonnock Road with the start of construction of 11 residential apartments on the building's second floor.

ITEM	RECEIVED IN FEBRUARY	FISCAL YEAR 2016 TOTAL
BUILDING PERMITS	38	404
ELECTRICAL PERMITS	26	232
PLUMBING PERMITS	12	91
MECHANICAL PERMITS	15	187
SPRINKLER PERMIT	2	7
MOBILE HOME PERMITS	0	3
ESTIMATED VALUE	2,571,582	
RESIDENTIAL PERMITS ISSUED—NEW	0	8
ESTIMATED VALUE	0	1,445,500
RESIDENTIAL ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	27	309
NEW COMMERCIAL PERMITS	0	2
COMMERCIAL ADDITIONS	7	40
SIGNS	0	11
POOL PERMITS	2	5
SHED PERMITS	1	19
SINGLE FAMILY/DUPLEX UNITS APPROVED	7	24
TOTAL FEES COLLECTED (less reimbursements)	26,870	
CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY ISSUED	12	71
UNITS CONNECTED TO TOWN SEWER	1	16
HDC CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS	4	38
CODE ENFORCEMENT		
SIGN VIOLATIONS	7	343
VEHICLES/WASTE	0	9
OTHER ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS	1	14
PENDING LITIGATION	0	1
CASES RESOLVED	3	15